



# HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

6751 Columbia Gateway Drive, Suite 400, Columbia, Maryland 21046  
410-313-6000

JOHN S. BUTLER, FIRE CHIEF • ALLAN H. KITTLEMAN, COUNTY EXECUTIVE

The Howard County Fire Department would like to introduce you to a system designed to prevent damage caused by firefighters who are simply doing their job. The Knox Box Rapid Entry System was specifically developed for fire departments.

## How it Works

The access box is a small, wall mounted vault designed to aid firefighters in gaining immediate access to a structure or area. The box is keyed to a single master key controlled by the fire department. No other agency or business owner has access to the device.

- With a Knox Box the fire department does not have to wait for the property owner or representative to unlock the door in the middle of the night or it is not necessary to gain access by forced entry.
- If you're injured or incapacitated, entry can be made quickly. The elderly and/or critically ill who depend on support services such as *LifeLine* can benefit from a Knox Box.
- The Knox Box system reduces response time, property damage and the liability for lost keys. Doors can even be locked after an investigation.
- Master keys are locked in a device on the apparatus, and can only be released by our communication system to that individual unit. An audit trail allows supervisors to see when the keys are released in the unit.

## Purchasing

- You are responsible for purchasing the Knox Box and it will be shipped directly to the location of your choice.
- The most convenient way to purchase is on line through the web site, [www.knoxbox.com](http://www.knoxbox.com).
- On the web site pick the type of box you are interested in, the most popular box for business are the 3200 series and 1650 series for residential.
- When you access the series of box you plan to review or purchase the site will prompt you to select the fire department, **make sure you use the Howard Co Dept of Fire/Res Svcs.** Keys/Locks are unique to each jurisdiction.
- If you do not have access to the web, contact the Fire Marshal's Office for assistance.
- The site also allows purchase of key pad locks, key switches for gates that all operate on the same principle.

## Mounting

- Upon receiving your Knox Box you will need to have the box mounted as per the directions given with the box.
- Typically the box will be located on the right side of the main entrance approximately 3-6 feet above grade. If you're not sure of the mounting location or have more than one box to mount, contact our office for directions.
- The box is shipped in the open position or door not attached. If the lid is not attached please place the lid in a safe place where you can find it later.
- The door alert decal stickers that come with the box will be placed by the inspector when the keys are installed, and the cover is locked.



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## **Install Cover and Keys**

- After the Box has been mounted and you are ready to insert the keys, contact the Howard County Fire Marshal's Office at **410-313-6040**. An inspector will come by and insert the keys and lock the box.
- Remember you have no access to the box and need to contact the Fire Marshal's Office if any changes are made to the locks in your building.
- The set of keys could be one master key to all entrance doors and interior rooms. If no master key is available the set should include: building entrance keys, security gates, keys to electrical and mechanical rooms, fire alarm and sprinkler rooms, elevator equipment rooms hazardous material storage rooms and any other storage areas. If the building has an elevator, include an elevator key. All keys shall be marked or identified. A list of emergency contact names and phone numbers can also be placed in the box.